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True Church

1895

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THE TRUE CHURCH

AND ITS

Characteristics

OF

UNITY,

PEACE AND PURITY.

Jacob S. Lehman
1895

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The True Church.

"And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

"And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," (Mat. XVI., 16. 18.)

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (I Cor. III., 11.)

THE confession of Peter, "Thou art the Christ the son of the living God," contains the fundamental principle of the office of Christ as Prophet, Priest, and King. Upon these principles: Christ's sinlessness; his fulfilling of the law by perfect obedience; his sacrificial offering or atonement upon the cross; his resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Father;—upon these as a foundation, he has built his church, and all the craft, strategy, and devices of the devil, together with temporal death shall not prevail against it.

The church consists of true and faithful individuals who have awakened to a knowledge and a sense of their sins, have repented and forsaken their former course of life, and have sought and obtained remission, pardon

and peace by faith in the merit and righteousness of Jesus Christ. Such regenerated persons are renewed to the divine image and are heirs of the heavenly inheritance.

The church of Christ, as visibly organized upon the earth, was established on the day of Pentecost; at which time three thousand souls were truly converted. By the preaching of the Apostles they were convinced of their guilt, and gladly received the message of free salvation. Their conversion was sudden but not transient, and was a real change wrought in their souls by the Holy Ghost. They were steadfast in the Apostles' doctrine, and "They that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." (Acts II., 41.) "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (Acts II., 47)

In the consideration of the character of the church of Christ, we will observe the following order: First, The unity of the church; second, Its peaceable character; and third, Its purity.

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH.

We will now inquire what scriptural testimony can be produced confirmatory of the doctrine of the unity of the church.

We will ask our dear friends who read these pages to have patience with us while we direct their attention to a few of the many figures, types, and predictions of the old testament bearing on the subject under consideration.

In the garden of Eden we find a clear type or figure of the church, in Eve, the mother of mankind. Adam, in whom the human race began, was a type of Christ, of him through whom the race should be restored. The deep sleep of Adam, the opening of his side, and the forming of Eve from the rib taken from his side; the consequent union between them, thus fittingly expressed: "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh," a complete and indissoluble union, are true figures of Christ's death, of the opening of his side, of his resurrection and the regeneration of his people wrought through his death, whom he accepts as his church and bride. The apostle Paul bears witness to the above, when he writes upon marriage: "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." (Eph. v. ,32.) "My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is

the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her." (Sol. vi., 9.)

TYPES AND FIGURES.

Solomon wrote figuratively and prophetically of the church, under the figure of the bride and bridegroom. He represents the love of Christ for his church, and her devotion to him. This text clearly witnesses the unity of the spouse or church of Christ.

The Hebrews were a type of the church and of unity. Upon that memorable night when the destroying angel passed through the land of Egypt and slew the firstborn of all the Egyptians, but passed over the houses of the Hebrews; they were separated from the Egyptians, and were in their houses, sheltered by the blood of the Pascal lamb. "And the blood shall be to you for a token, and when I see the blood I will pass over you." (Exodus xii., 13) The blood upon the side posts and the upper door posts of their houses, was representative of the blood of Jesus Christ which saves all those who believe in him.

By virtue of the blood, the first born of the Hebrews were saved from death, and they as a people and congregation were effectually separated from the Egyptians. The Pascal lamb was to be without blemish; a male of the first year. It was to be offered whole, not a bone to be broken: "In one

house shall it be eaten : thou shalt not carry forth aught of the flesh abroad out of the house." The roasting of the passover lamb is a fitting representation of the sufferings of Christ for us. The unleavened bread represents the practical separation from sin by all who are redeemed in his blood. The bitter herbs symbolize the suffering of the saints for Christs sake, to be associated with Christ in his glory we must also be associated with him in his suffering. The Hebrews, or literal Israel, were sheltered by the blood of the lamb; they were separated from the Egyptians, shut up in their houses, one united people, in the attitude of pilgrims. With their loins girded their shoes on their feet and their staves in their hands. Truly a fitting type of the spiritual Israel redeemed in the blood of Christ associated with him by living faith and united with one another by love.

We believe that the literal Israel is a figure of the spiritual Israel, the church of Jesus Christ. God made choice of Israel as a peculiar treasure. The feast of the passover had significance only to them. The tabernacle, and afterwards the temple, was designed only for that peculiar people. Since all the males were circumcised to qualify them for the enjoyment of the immunities, privileges and blessings of an Israelite, it clearly follows that all true believers in Jesus Christ are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands in putting off the body of the sins

of the flesh. To the literal Israel there was one law for the home-born and the stranger. To the spiritual Israel or church of Christ there is but one rule of life. "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus." (Romans, xv., 5. 6.)

THE TEMPLE AS A TYPE.

The temple at Jerusalem symbolize the true temple not made with hands whose maker and builder is God. "Ye are God's building." (1 Cor. iii., 9.) "Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord." (Eph. ii., 21.) Through regeneration, souls are restored to the divine life are spiritually minded and have fellowship one with another. Such souls constitute the spiritual temple of which the literal temple was a type. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. xviii., 20.)

The temple built by Solomon was a fit type of the church; the material was pre-prepared before it was brought thither; so that "there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was building." (1 Kings vi., 7.) This figure or type should impress all seriously disposed persons, from the fact of the frequent

allusions to it by the Apostles of Christ. In the preparation of the material for the building of the literal temple different classes of workmen were employed. The felling of the trees and the quarrying of the stones was one service; the dressing and squaring of the material was another; the placing of it was still another service. In the economy of the salvation of sinners and the rearing of the spiritual temple, there are different stages of preparatory work.

The Sinaitic law — the ministration of condemnation, renders the first service to the slumbering sinner. Its proclamation is in effect, "Awake thou that sleepest." Its work was manifest on the day of Pentecost when three thousand persons were awakened to a sense of their lost condition and exclaimed, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" The service of felling the lofty cedars, and that of lifting the massive and ill shapen stones from their resting places preparatory to the building of the literal temple was representative of the service of the law to the sinner.

JOHN THE BAPTIST.

The ministration of John the Baptist, follows that of the law. "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight." "And he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the chil-

dren to the fathers." (Matt. iv., 6.) John taught repentance and reformation of life. The sound of the trumpet exceeding loud and the peals of thunder from mount Sinai are no more heard; the ascending smoke, as of a furnace and the quaking of the mount are no more witnessed. Yet the law once engraven on tables of stone still survives. It continues to be the ministration of condemnation,—the schoolmaster to bring sinners to Christ. John the Baptists once familiar and well known form has long since disappeared from earth, but his mission lives,—the mission of preparing the heart for the reception of Christ. The effect of John the Baptists ministration was and is yet, a moral reformation. Jesus Christ the heavenly architect perfects the material. He will pardon from sin; he will renew, recreate, and sanctify them and make them fit material for the spiritual temple. "Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable unto God by Jesus Christ." (Peter ii., 5.) "For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them and I will be their God and they shall be my people." (2 Cor. vi., 16.) "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you." (1 Cor. iii., 16.) "Ye who were dead in sins and trespasses hath he quickened."

Here the Apostles employed typical language, regarding the temple, its priesthood and sacrifices. The temple was the center of Jehovahs worship; all acceptable worship had reference to the temple service.

Instructive lessons can also be drawn from that which existed within the temple. The vail separating between the holy place and the most holy, showing that the hand writing of ordinances was not yet removed and that the way was not yet open for admittance to fellowship and communion with God. The vail is taken away in Christ. The High Priest who entered the holy of holies once a year to make an offering for his own sins and for those of all the people, a fit type of Jesus Christ who entered the true holy of holies with his own blood and made a perpetual offering for the sins of his people.

The ark of the covenant made of shittim wood overlaid with gold, covered with the mercy seat of solid gold, and at each end a cherubim looking towards each other and covering with their wings the whole surface. It contains the two tables of the law, Aaron's rod and the golden pot that had manna. The ark may be considered a figure of a sanctified heart; the wood representing humanity, the covering of gold representing the righteousness of Christ; the law written upon tables of stone a symbol of the law of life in Christ Jesus written upon the fleshly table of the heart; the mercy seat of pure gold

a fit emblem of Jesus Christ who was sinless, — the embodiment of all that was good, the Savior of mankind; the two cherubims —as figures of the old and new covenant. The law and the prophets pointed forward to Christ, and the gospel directs us to what Christ has accomplished.

THE LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD.

The Levites and their service at the temple was figurative of the service of John the baptist and his disciples. The service of the Levites was preparatory. They served the priests in the ministrations of the temple. They brought to them the things necessary for the sacrifice. They had themselves to be prepared for their office. "Thus shalt thou do unto them to cleanse them: sprinkle water of purifying upon them and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean. (Numbers viii., 7.) The priests were a figure of the redeemed of the Lord under the new covenant, "Ye are a Royal priesthood." Every Christian is a priest; he through the Spirit offers his body a living sacrifice holy and acceptable to God. He seeks to glorify his Creator in body and spirit.

UNITY FORETOLD BY PROPHECY.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts: and will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquitiy, and I will remember their sins no more.'' (Jer. xxxi., 31–34.) Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews (viiii., 8 to 14,) is witness that the prediction of the prophet was fulfilled upon the day of Pentecost, and that it will continue to be fulfilled until the end of time. Christ hath obtained an everlasting victory over sin, death and hell, by virtue of his fulfillment of the holy law in all its extensive spiritual requirements, of his atoning sacrifice, resurrection and ascension to the right-hand of the Father. The power of this victory he now by his spirit communicates to all those who believe in him unto salvation. Such constitute the true Isreal of God, who are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, upon whose hearts

he writes his law; and they become his epistle which may be read of all men. (2 Cor. iii.) Having the same law, they will have the same rule of life.

THE SHEPHERD AND THE SHEEP.

In the gospel of St. John, unity is taught in such language that should be comprehensible to every one. In the tenth chapter, Christ uses sheep as a type or figure of his people. Sheep instinctively collect together and form one flock. Christ is the shepherd; all true believers are his sheep; they know his voice and they follow him whithersoever he leadeth them. In the sixteenth verse he says: "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also must I bring and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd."

In the above passage Christ alludes to the Gentiles who should believe in him; that they also will hear his voice and follow him. Here the language of the Apostle (Col. iii., 10, 11.) fitly applies: "And have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all, and in all." In this parable Christ represents himself as the true shepherd of all the sheep. He also represents his ministers as shepherds, those who are divinely appointed to minister to

and care for the flock. To them the Spirit opens the hidden treasures of the gospel, so that they can feed the flock. The ministers of Jesus Christ willingly take oversight of the flock out of love, not for filthy lucre; the sheep (namely the members of the church) hear, and follow them, for they know their voice. The ministers dispense to the members the bread of life, or the word of God. The members obey them and love them as those who watch over their souls. When the members obey those who have the rule over them (we mean faithful ministers of Christ) they will prosper and be under the promise of the divine blessing, and they constitute the church of the living God, the ground and pillar of the truth.

THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES.

In the first part of the 15 chapter of John, Christ compares himself to a vine and his followers to branches of the vine; "I am the vine and ye are the branches." Since the branches of a natural vine partake of the nature and the character of the vine; it follows that the branches in the true spiritual vine, Jesus Christ, partake of his nature. This parable most clearly teaches the unity of all true believers; they are united by true living faith. The divine life within the soul is nourished by union with Christ, to which Paul bears witness: "Nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me and the life that I now live here

in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. ii, 20.) Some of our friends claiming that the branches in the vine represent the different churches or denominations, try to support divisions by the above parable. Such a claim is untenable, for the following reasons; if the different denominations were branches in the vine, they would receive spiritual life from it and produce the same kind of fruit: they would then be of one mind, joined in the same judgment and would speak the same thing, which would end divisions, since there would no longer be a cause for them. Every intelligent person knows that such unity as here mentioned does not exist among the professors of the Christian religion. For example there are those of our friends who maintain that it is lawful for Christians to swear a legal oath; to sue at the law to obtain justice; to wage just wars; to baptize infants; to retain known unrepentant sinners in the church, and that they may differ in doctrine and practice to such an extent as to necessitate separate organizations. There are others of our friends who testify earnestly against many of the above privileges and refuse the communion to those holding such views. There are again others who reject all of these privileges and practices as antichristian. How can any one claim that these are all branches in the vine and partakers of the divine nature? Such discordant elements

cannot possibly emanate from the Lord.

CHRIST'S PRAYER FOR UNITY.

In John xvii., is recorded Christs high-priestly prayer: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe thou hast sent me." The above prayer Christ offered in behalf of all his people until the end of time. It impresses the mind with the idea of a real unity. Christ primarily prayed for his disciples, probably including the seventy, that they might be united in faith and practice; but he also prayed for those who through all time should believe on him through their word that they also should be in perfect unity. Every Christian believes that Christ's prayer reflected the divine will and therefore was answered. The result of Christ's redemption could not be anything but unity; he came to take the armor from the strong man armed, to destroy his work in the hearts of men; to renew them to the divine image and to bring them in harmony with the divine economy. Upon the day of Pentecost the above prayer was verified: "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul." (Acts. iv., 32.)

The human body is used as a figure of the unity of the church, it being composed of

many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body whether we be Jew or Gentile, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one spirit." (1Cor. xxi., 12, 13.) "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. (Eph. iv., 16.)

ORDINANCES POINT TO UNITY.

The ordinances commanded by Jesus Christ and required of his church, carry with them the lesson of unity. There are three: Baptism, the Lord's Supper and Feet-washing. "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." (Mat. xxiii., 19. 20.)

According to the above no one shall be admitted as a member of the church, unless he has come to a saving knowledge of the God-head. In John xvii., we read: "This is life eternal, to know thee the only true

God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.'' It is generaly acceded that no one should be received into the church, unless he believes in Jesus Christ as the savior of sinners. He cannot realize Christs saving power, until he has a knowledge of the purity and holiness of God and through the spirituality of this knowledge he realizes his defiled and lost condition, and can appreciate and accept the offer of peace and pardon by faith in Jesus Christ. "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ'' (Rom. v. 1.)

Penitent believing persons are proper subjects for baptism and church membership. They may be baptized in the name of the Father, since they recognize his righteousness, his love and his mercy: in the name of the Son, since they accept him as their righteousness, sanctification and redemption: in the name of the Holy Ghost, since they have come under his enlightening and purifyng influence.

A fit subject for baptism is in harmony with the heavenly economy, which includes the exercise of supreme love to God and the practice of loving our neighbors as ourselves: wanting this change no one can fitly be baptized in the names of the trinity. Baptism is a representation of having put on Christ, the Savior of mankind, who came to seek and to save that which was lost,

by faith, with his cleansing virtues. This ordinance is representative of union with Christ and is designed as an induction into the visible church, which is the earthly home of saved souls. It clearly involves the idea of unity.

Water baptism will not avail without the spiritual baptism. The prophet Joel foretold this baptism. (Joel ii., 28,29.) "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit" When Peter witnessed the Holy Ghost falling upon Cornelius and those of his house, he remembered the word of the Lord : "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost" John the baptist testified : He that cometh after me shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. For as many as are baptized into Jesus Christ are baptized into his death. It is the soul that is baptized into Christ by the Holy Ghost. Believers or Christians have died unto sin and have by faith arisen to newness of life and have been freed from the law of sin and death by the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. They are led by the spirit of God and are sons and daughters of God. They are baptized by one spirit into one body and made to drink into one Spirit. There is one body and one Spirit, one God who is father of all.

From the above, the following conclusions

are reached. First: Water baptism is an initiatory ordinance into the visible church of Christ. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." (Acts, ii.,41.) Second: It is a representation or expression of an inward state, viz. of a death to sin, crucifixion with Christ and of a spiritual resurrection, and of a consecration of body and soul to the Lord. "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (1Peter iii.,21) No one can have the answer of a good conscience, but by living, saving faith in Christ. Third: It is a fruit of obedience. "Here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" (Acts viii.,36.) "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, in the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. (Acts viii., 12.)

THE EUCHARIST OR COMMUNION.

This consists of breaking the bread and drinking the cup. "And as they were eating Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take eat; this is my body, and he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the

new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (Mat. xxvi., 28.) Luke records the Lord's words thus: "This do in remembrance of me." "For I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take eat, this is my body, which was broken for you, this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying: This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he comes." (1 Cor. xi., 23 – 26.)

By this ordinance the church commemorates the death of Christ. His death involves the fullfilment of the holy law; his atoning sacrifice upon the cross, and triumphant resurrection and ascension to the Father. Its effects are the taking of the armor from the strong man armed; the destruction of the work of the devil in the hearts of Christ's people; the restoration to the soul of the divine love and image, and consequent gathering together of the children of God, who were scattered abroad. In order that the church may show forth Christ's death, she must stand in the power of his death. To be in that relation is to have the spirit and

life of Christ and the consequent unity: "For we being many are one bread and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread." (1 Cor. x.,17.)

FEET WASHING.

For authority for observance of this ordinance, see John xiii. Feet washing emblematically teaches the need, which all believers experience, of the service of Christ as intercessor in washing them of their daily defilements, and the washing of one another by the fellowship of love, humility, forbearance and the practice of reclaiming erring brethren by admonition and reproof.

We will invite the attention of the reader to a scripture we deem very important, which is little practiced by the great mass of christian professors. It is the specific rule given to the church by our dear Lord and Savior, for her preservation in the unity of the spirit and bond of peace: "Moreover if thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother, but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." (Matt. xviii,)

The above teaches the doctrine of unity very forcibly. The command is: "If thy brother trespass against thee." All members of the church are brethren and sisters, and recognize each other as such. In fact all the redeemed of the Lord are brethren; they are fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God. If brethren, they are solemnly bound to love and serve each other. No matter where the church is located, she is one and the same in faith and doctrine.

The seven churches of Asia, of which we read in Revelation, were organizations located in different parts of Asia Minor. The church at one place was the same in faith and practice as at other places. It is true a church or organized body of believers in one locality may become too carnal; lose much of the light and power of christian life, and suffer errors to come in; as was the case with five of the above named churches, as also the church at Corinth; when she retained for a time a notorious sinner and was puffed up notwithstanding her affliction. But in consequence of the unity of the church, such decline will be discovered by members who remain faithful and will be reported to the church or elders of the church at other places, where the church continues sound in doctrine who will visit such declining church, discover the unfaithful ones and labor for their correction.

If such labor is not successful they will sep-

arate them from the church, and not cease in their labor until order and soundness in faith and practice is attained. Thus the apostles labored in all the churches where there was decline in the spiritual life.

We will revert to the command: "If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." It will readily be perceived that unless professedChristians are united in faith and doctrine, this command is impracticable. If the popular view is correct that Christians may be divided in faith and practice to such an extent, as to result in separate and distinct organizations, called churches; and that it makes no difference to which of these churches persons belong, if they only do what is right, then this specific and positive command of Jesus must be ignored. If it be true that the members of these different churches are Christians; they are brethren and are commanded by Christ to serve each other in love, to the extent, that if a brother errs, he who is cognizant of it, is solemnly bound to tell him of his fault; if he does not hear him he must take one or two more with him and labor for his recovery; if he hear not these, the matter is to be brought before the church; if he hear not the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican,—that is, separate him from the church.

Does not every God-fearing person see

that such procedure as Christ commanded is impossible under the conditions adverted to? Few if any members of the many churches, recognize that such duties devolve upon them toward members of other denominations, or even realize that it is a duty they owe toward those with whom they are associated in church fellowship. The view that true believers can be divided in doctrine and practice, and constitute separate and distinct organizations, is at variance with New Testament teaching, and therefore should be condemned by all true disciples of Christ.

If unity of the church is a scriptural doctrine, or in plainer language, if there is but one church of Christ, the same in faith and practice everywhere, the withdrawal of true believers from false worship will follow as a consequence.

Those who defend divisions are recognized by the holy writers as enemies to the true and saving doctrine of Christ. "Mark those which cause offences and divisions, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them." (Rom. xvi., 17) "And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." (John x., 4, 5) "He that transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God.

If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your houses, neither bid him God speed." (2 John 9, 10.) True charity influences us to love our neighbors as ourselves. When we transgress the doctrine of Christ, we are reproved by his spirit and are constrained through divine love to repent of our sins, and to confess and forsake them. When we see our neighbors and friends who profess to be Christians, transgress scriptural teachings, love will constrain us to separate from their worship. The principle of love constrains the redeemed to stand aloof from the unrighteous practice of the disobedient. The members of the true church of Christ will not hear their preachers nor unite in their worship. This they will be constrained to do through true love, to warn them of their error and of the danger to which their souls are exposed.

THE PEACE OF THE CHURCH.

We will first consider the individual believer. The peace of each individual believer, is that state of mind and heart which results from a living faith in the merit and righteousness of Christ. "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. v., 1.) It is a peace above all understanding, the witness of a good conscience and fellowship with God, and with all the inhabitants of heaven.

The peace of the church is the effect of the spiritual union of each believer with Christ. "Fulfill ye my joy that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." (Phil. ii., 2.) "Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger be put away from you with all malice, and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (Eph. iv., 31,32.) "Put on therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And

let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." (Col. iii., 12–16.) By the above scripture testimony it is fully demonstrated that the members of the true church must be at peace with one another.

THE LOVE OF THE CHURCH.

When Christ the great head of the church first appeared on earth as an infant child, the angels of God celebrated his birth by the proclamation of: "On the earth peace and good will to men."

This message was confirmatory of prophetic teaching, "And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Is. ii., 4.) "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them." (Isaih xii., 6.)

The above and many other prophetic testimonies, figuratively represent, portray and foretell a condition of peace; a condition where they do not hurt, destroy nor waste.

The prophets spake as they were moved by the holy spirt; the spirit of God did not dwell in them as it dwells in the hearts of the

truly regenerated. He was with them and inspired them with the knowledge of what was then many centuries in the future. They did not have a clear understanding of their utterance. When Peter confessed, "Thou art the Christ the son of the living God," he was inspired by the Holy Spirit; yet he did not comprehend all that was involved in his confession. He did not understand Christ's mission nor his kingdom. It was not possible that the prophets nor the disciples before the Holy Ghost came upon them, could understand the mystery of redemption. All mankind were involved in the fall and suffered the effects of it. These were an enfeebling of the moral powers, a disability entailing upon all Adam's posterity; resulting in hardness of heart and a darkened understanding. The divine judgment upon man was: "They are altogether gone out of way and the way of peace they have not known". Christ's testimony upon this point is all-sufficient; "Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again." (John iii., 7) Mark! his direct address to his disciples; "Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Mat. xviii., 3.)

The foregoing texts should settle the question of the relation of old testament believers and Christ's disciples, to his kingdom.

If the disciples were unconverted men, while Christ was personally with them, then surely the old testament believers were unregenerated. This is why they were allowed to exact justice.

NON-RESISTANCE OF EVIL

According to the civil or judicial regulation under the old law, to which our Lord refers, they could carry their grievances before the judges or magistrates. Their rule in deciding cases was: "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe." The civil law of Moses was based upon justice. It did not authorize private revenge. Injured persons were expected to present their grievances to the properly appointed authorities, where testimony would be received and the verdict made out upon the principles of justice. The law of Moses no more sanctions the right of private revenge by the infliction of personal injury upon the offender through the complainant than the civil law does under our enlightened instituions. It is then very apparent that Christ forbids a privilege to his disciples which was allowed to the believers under the old law.

The question naturally arises, why this difference? For the reason already noted. mans relation to God is changed by virtue

of his regeneration and adoption into the family of God. Note well the change. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, but I say unto you that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. (Mat.v.,37–40.) "But I say unto you, love your enemies etc. verse 44.

Every lover of truth and sound doctrine will admit that the above precepts are designed to promote peace and good will, and are in harmony with the divine economy; which is to love God supremely and one's neighbor as himself. He will also admit that they are directly opposed to the dictates of carnal reason. This latter fact proves the necessity of a change in man.

After Christ had fulfilled the law, atoned for sin upon the cross, triumphed over death and ascended to the right hand of the Father, he sent the Holy Ghost upon his disciples, whereby they were regenerated and fitted to preach the everlasting gospel of peace and pardon. Upon the day of Pentecost the disciples preached with great power to a large congregation. The word preached was the power of God unto salvation to all who believed. Those regenerated souls were in harmony with Christ's doctrine and life.

Christ taught the Jews not to seek the kingdom of heaven by the means of observation, but to seek it within themselves.

CHRISTS KINGDOM ESTABLISHED.

Upon the day of Pentecost the kingdom of Jesus Christ came upon earth and was established in the hearts of the truly converted; such who had become partakers of the divine nature and had been renewed to the divine image. Upon that memorable occasion was fulfilled the angelic proclamation: "On the earth peace." The reign of peace has not ended; it has been continued in the hearts and lives of the saints for over eighteen hundred years. This is the true Millenium or reign of a thousand years, intervening as a full period of time between the out pouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost and the final day when Christ will subject his reign to the Father. (1 Cor. 15.)

True Chrisians are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." (1 Peter ii., 9.) Christ by his spirit possesses the hearts of his people, ruling and reigning therein, and giving power to overcome sin and to live sanctified lives. The members of the true church of Christ do not defend their persons, reputations or property, either by physical force or by process of law. By so doing they act in harmony with the positive commands of

Jesus and his example: "Who when he was reviled, reviled not again, and when he suffered he threatened not." To be smitten in the face would be a personal indignity and insult; yet Christ teaches as plainly as language can make it that we must not resent the injury. If they shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, rejoice and be exceeding glad for great is your reward in heaven." (Mat. v., 11, 12.)

A Christian can bear those injuries with great comfort, through faith in Jesus Christ. It is a healthful discipline for the soul. No one will injure an innocent person unless he who commits the injury is in gross darkness. and for such the heart of a believer yearns. If man would prefer an unjust claim against a disciple of Jesus, sue him and unjustly take his property from him, he will not defend it by civil process or otherwise, no matter how much he may need it.

Litigation promotes strife. Neighbors becoming involved in a lawsuit nearly always become estranged from each other. It does not promote confidence nor good feeling, and therefore is incompatible with Christianity. "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish." (James iii., 14, 15.)

CHRIST'S KINGDOM NOT OF THIS WORLD.

We cannot conceive how any one can claim to be a Christian and yet engage in litigation contrary to the express command of Christ. If Christians are forbidden to go to law, they certainly cannot go to war. "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." (John xviii., 36.)

Christ confessed before Pilate that he was a king, but his kingdom was not of this world; that it had nothing to do with men's temporal affairs; it would not interfere with existing worldy governments, and that there was no cause for jealousy on the part of earthly monarchs. If he had sought earthly dominion he would have armed his followers, but on the contrary he had but a few inoffensive followers. The above was embodied in the language of Jesus, when he said: "My kingdom is not of this world." It clearly appears from his language that his kingdom is not of this world, and can not be defended by carnal weapons, nor be made subsidiary to carnal ends, for secular advantage. It is altogether of another nature, having entirely different aims and ends in view, from those of worldly kingdoms.

Scotts exposition, in his Commentary, of

(John xviii.,33–36.) sustains the above view. In his comment on (Isaiah ii.,4) he makes the following assertion. "If all men were consistent Christians, there could be no war."

Christ by his spirit reigns in the hearts of his people, and therefore earthly rulers and their dominion are not interfered with. Since he sought no earthly dominion his followers, who are strangers and pilgrims on earth, seeking and longing for a heavenly home, will not contend and fight for an earthly kingdom.

CHRISTIANITY AND WAR.

It will generally be admitted that if all men were Christians, there could be no war. War is of the devil; if he had not sown the evil seed of strife into the hearts of our first parents, there would not have been war on this earth. Christ came to destroy the work of the devil, hence it follows that warring will cease among Christians, since he gives them power to become sons of God. He compares his followers to sheep, as before observed. Sheep have no tusks nor claws to defend themselves against their enemies; they are not carnivorous, but live upon herbage; they have no protection but in flight. The sheep is a fit emblem of the defenseless and inoffensive character of the Christian. The prophet foretelling the crucifixion of Christ, says: "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb so

he openeth not his mouth." (Isaiah liii., 7.)

Many of our friends frankly admit that the doctrine of the non-resistance of evil, or passive submission to insult and injury, is certainly right, but they say it is inapplicable to the present state of the world. They say government is a necessity for the protection of the good and the punishment of the wicked, and that government or rule, implies the existence of laws, and laws to be productive of good, must be enforced by the sword, if necessary. They quote as authority, Romans xiii. "The powers that be are ordained of God." Again: "For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."

We freely admit that government is an ordinance of God and designed for the preservation of order in the world, by protecting those who do well and punishing the evil-doers. Any system of worldly authority or government is preferable to anarchy. Christians are taught by precept and example, to honor the magistracy by obedience to its laws in all things wherein they are not antagonistic to the higher law of Jesus Christ. They conscientiously pay whatever taxes or dues are assessed upon them. Our Lord covered the whole ground of duty, when he

said: "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things which are God's." Our temporal possessions and privileges are Caesar's; hence taxes and dues belong to Caesar. All our faculties of mind and soul are the Lord's.

We are called upon to glorify God in our bodies and souls, which we can only do by obedience to his will: and since he has taught us not to fight with carnal weapons, if we love him, we will also obey him. We have been told by prominent professors of religion that the peace doctrine is right, but according to that teaching, a foreign nation could come and destroy our government, and bring the nation into a state of subjection, which they thought would be intolerable. This reminded us of the conference held by the Jews and its conclusions: "If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away our place and nation." (John xi., 48.)

PRACTICABILITY OF NON-RESISTANCE.

To avoid the above named embarrassment, it is needful to keep in view that Christ's kingdom is spiritual, separate and distinct from the kingdoms of this world. Its laws and regulations are in many respects opposite to earthly kingdoms. If all men would embrace the spirit and doctrine of Christ, this embarrassment could not exist, as the sword

would then be sheathed and war would have no existance; they would be governed by the higher law: "Love thy neighbor as thy self." As ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

Christians are chosen out of the world and are preserved from the evil that is in it; they are citizens of the heavenly kingdom, the principles of which are supreme love to God, and to love thy neighbor as thyself. If they are called to peace they may not secure justice by force, and therefore may not bear arms; and if they may not bear arms, they may not hold offices and administer justice, neither may they exercise the privilege of voting to place men in office.

The apparent difficulty in reconciling the above conclusion with the admitted necessity of government, vanishes when we separate the two kingdoms. The kingdom of this world or worldly government, is only a necessity on account of the unconverted world. Therefore the rulers are necessitated to compel ill-disposed persons to obey the laws and if need be use force in so doing. This a Christian will not do, therefore he may not be used in the administration of the government.

In the kingdom of Christ, love is the principle; hence those who have been renewed to the divine image, and become partakers of the divine nature, are adopted into that kingdom. If Christians are at liber-

ty to engage in law-suits, and in times of war to fight for the country, where is the evidence that Christ was upon earth and wrought redemption? Where is the evidence that he brought peace on the earth and good will to men? Where is the fruit of his agonizing death and triumph over the world, over sin and the devil? O friends, reflect upon the seriousness of this matter while you have opportunity.

THE PURITY OF THE CHURCH.

"Even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it ; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing : but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. v., 25–27.)

Paul to Titus writes : "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." It is apparent that Christ designed that his people should be a living epistle that could be read of all men. His own testimony is as follows: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

By the purity of the church we do not mean that there will be no failings, or that there will not be those who will backslide and even fall from grace, neither do we claim that there may not be hypocrites in the fold; but what we do claim, with authority from Christ and his apostles, is that the church of Christ will not retain known, unrepentant sinners in its congregation. The church will exclude all such who sin willfully and know-

ingly ; such as drunkards, adulterers, extortioners and all who presumptuously transgress the doctrine of Christ ; and not only those, but also such as grow cold careless and prayerless, who lose the love to Jesus and his people.

We again refer to the text in Matt. xviii. "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone ; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

From the above text it is evident that Christ designed that his church should be kept pure. The sins alluded to, are not willful overt acts of sin: they are sins of inadvertance resulting from want of watchfulness and prayer. Two brethren may have daily intercourse with each other ; one may offend the other by being too hasty or too light-minded ; he may err in some business transaction, manifesting too much selfishness. In what ever way he offends or weakens his fellow believer, it is the duty of the offended party to tell the offender of his fault in the spirit of love and meekness. If he confesses

his fault he is gained, and no one out side of those two persons shall know anything about it, and thus grace and peace will be multiplied. But if the erring one does not hear, then the offended member shall take one or two brethren with him; they shall hear the case; if they agree that the accused is in fault, they labor further with him; if he sees his error and confesses. he will be forgiven, and love will prevail. But if he hears not these, they will tell it unto the church; if he hears the church and confesses his sin, he will be forgiven of God and of the church, and charity will have triumphed.

A NOTABLE COMMAND.

The above is a notable command, it is an emanation of love. There is no more specific rule between the lids of the New Testament. It is the only means whereby love, confidence, freedom and true christian courtesy can be maintained among believers. The observance of it is especially important where members have daily communication with one another.

We venture the assertion that there can be no organization on this earth, the members of which are in perfect harmony, without the practice of the above rule.

Since those who commit sins of weakness and justify themselves in them, are to be labored with so perseveringly, and if they do

not repent, are to be excommunicated; is it not evident that open sinners, such as extortioners, railers, drunkards, liars, adulterers and all who willfully transgress the word of God must be separated from the church? "Now we command you brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us." (2 Thes.iii,6.) "For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busy bodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread. And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." (2 Thess.iii.,11–14.) 4th Paul reproves the Corinthians for retaining a fornicator in the church. "And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you." "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" In the latter clause of the thirteenth verse: "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." (1 Cor. v.) Could language make anything plainer? In the observance of the Lord's supper, or the communion of breaking the bread and drinking the cup in

membrance of the suffering and death of Jesus Christ, the church lays off a testimony of her purity. "The bread which we break is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread." (1 Cor. x., 16, 17.)

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMUNION.

The above text indicates that all who partake of the emblem of the broken body and shed blood of Christ, express thereby that they love the Lord Jesus, and are also in spiritual communion and fellowship with him. It follows that no one who is sincere will commune with a known sinner, even if he be a member of the church. How could he encourage another in that which would be wrong for himself.

The Apostle teaches in 1 Cor. xii: "As oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death until he come." The Lord's death was designed for the destruction of sin and the gathering together of the children of God into one fold. If the church knowingly takes urepentant sinners to the communion, she cannot show forth the Lord's death, for the following reasons: he that committeth sin is of the devil. The Son of God was made manifest that he might destroy the works of the devil. If the work of the devil is destroyed in any one, he does

not commit willful sin, and therefore can show forth the Lord's death; but a sinner cannot show forth his death. If the church knowingly admits a sinner to the communion she transgresses the doctrine of Christ and is under judgment. "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and the table of devils." (1 Cor. x.,21.) "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. (1 John i, 6.)

It is certainly walking in darkness when saint and sinner indiscriminately partake of the emblems of Christ's broken body and shed blood, professing to commemorate his suffering and death. "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." (1 Cor. xi., 29, 30.)

The church is Christ's body. It behooves every faithful member to review the church or discern it: to learn whether the members are united in love and confidence, and are living godly lives, not only upon communion occasions, but at all times. He cannot suffer sin to rest upon any of his brethren. Christians should at all times be able, when they meet to sit in heavenly places and have their conversation in heaven. If the mem-

bers become careless and love grows cold, and they break the bread and drink the cup, they bring condemnation upon themselves, not discerning the Lord's body: losing sight of the power of Christ's death. When the church gets into such a condition that she fails to separate offenders, then sincere members will be distressed; they will become spiritually sick and weak, and many will sleep: that is, be spiritually asleep; having lost sight of the true character of the church, flattering themselves with the idea that the ministers pass matters thus, and so they will be satisfied. Oh, sad, pitiful and mournful condition for a soul that was once enlightened.

Many of our learned friends apply the above language of Paul, thus: Discerning the Lord's body means to reflect upon and consider seriously the suffering and death of our Lord; and as the bread and wine represent the body and blood, it should be partaken of with due seriousness and solemnity, and not eaten in a light and thoughtless manner. All of this is true, but if that was all the apostle meant, why did he say that the effect of not discerning the Lord's body, produced weakness, sickness and sleep? There are many persons who go to what is called communion, in a light, worldly minded way, and yet those effects do not naturally follow; they do not naturally get weak or sick. It should

be apparent therefore to every one that the purity of the church is the principle involved in the text.

Christ's ministers are moved by love for the welfare of souls, to preach the unadulterated doctrine of Christ. They watch for souls; they feed the flock with the bread of life; they comfort the feeble-minded, warn the unruly and reprove those that sin, that others may fear, without respect of person. They stand upon the watch towers of Zion and cry aloud: "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O, Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O, Jerusalem."

SCRIPTURAL EXCOMMUNICATION.

According to scriptural testimony, excommunicated persons are to be held in avoidance by every member until they are again restored to the communion of the church. Our Savior says, "Let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican."

All attentive readers will discover that at the time Christ was upon earth, Judea was a Roman province, ruled by a governor appointed by Caesar. The sceptre had departed from Judah and they had not the right to inflict capital punishment; therefore they instituted the ban. If a Jew accepted the office of a publican, or tax collector, he was looked upon as a heathen and was avoided by all faithful Jews. It is said that such were

not allowed to enter the temple. That the Jews refused social intercourse and natural dealings with the heathen is apparent. When our Savior asked the Samaritan woman for a drink of water, she replied, "How is it that thou being a Jew askest drink of me which am a woman of Samaria, for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans."

When Peter came to the house of Cornelius, the Roman Centurian, he said unto them, "Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come into one of another nation :" "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat." (1 Cor. v., 11.) The context clearly proves that the apostle had reference to social intercourse. "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." (2 Thess. iii., 14.)

By the law as given in Deut. xiii., 6–12.; every Israelite was bound to defend the honor of his God and uphold the integrity of his law, without respecting the person of man. If the transgressor proved to be the nearest and dearest earthly friend, it still became a duty to assist in his prosecution and punishment, even unto death; when the crime was

a capital offense. The design of this severe economy was to preserve the Israelites from falling into idolatry and for the preservation of the knowledge of the one only and true God. These reasons for punishing apostates by death, do not now exist; but instead Christ instituted the ban, which was based upon love, having in view the safety and purity of the church, and the recovery of the apostate.

The law Moses applied only to the Israelites. It was only apostate brethren who were to be put to death, not heathen idolaters, and so it is with the spiritual Israel. Paul says, "What have I to do to judge them that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within. God will judge them that are without."

When Christ used the language; "Let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican;" the disciples, being Jews and acquainted with Jewish customs, understood him. He gave them a pattern or example with which they were very familiar. The Jews had not the spirit of love, hence they practiced the ban in a legal and severe manner. Christ did not intend that his disciples should ban apostates in the same spirit that the Jews did. He knew full well when they would be regenerated and had received his spirit, their hearts would be filled with charity. They would ban fallen members out of pure love, for their repentance and recovery.

They would not hold them as enemies, but admonish them as brethren.

RESPONSIBILITY OF PROFESSORS.

Solomon says: "It is better not to vow, than to vow and not to pay." It is a solemn and responsible act, to make a public profession of faith in Christ, to promise life-long allegiance to him. It is especially criminal to do despite to the spirit of grace; to treat the covenant wherewith one is sanctified as an unholy thing, and to deny Christ by again yielding to the spirit of the world.

Backsliders or fallen believers are under a heavier judgment than those who never knew the truth. The unprofitable servant who did not put his talent to usury confessed, "I knew thee, that thou gatherest where thou hast not strewn, and reapest where thou hast not sown." His Lord replied: "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, because thou knewest those things, thou shouldest have put thy talent to usury."

The parable of the unfaithful servant may be explained as follows: "I knew thee." Every Christian has experienced the spirituality of the holy law. It became a mirror through which he viewed the purity and the holiness of God, and by which he realized that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified. He further learned thereby that every secret work of man and all

wicked thoughts and unhallowed desires will be called into judgment, since God is not the author of them. The law is a chastening rod to impel the Christian to seek refuge in Christ; after which he is entreated to watch and pray, to be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. Also to add to his faith, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity. He is comforted with the assurance that if he abounds in the divine virtues, he shall never fail, but if he lack these things, the light will depart from him and he will become enveloped in darkness. The unfaithful servant made confession that he had attained to the above knowledge, but failed to profit by it, hence his severe sentence. From the foregoing it is apparent that the church should hold her fallen members in avoidance in order that they may be awakened to their true condition.

The Evangelical ban forbids social intercourse, such as engaging in natural business, and practicing the same social freedom in conversation and company as we exercise toward others, since it is designed to keep the apostate in mind of the divine judgment under which he lies bound, that he may repent and become released. It enjoins the following duty, "Admonish him as a brother;" that is, inquire into his spiritual exercise, admonish him unto repentance and

restoration to Jesus Christ and his church. If he is sick, visit him; if needy, give aid.

The ban or avoidance of excommunicated members is ignored by nearly all professors of religion, notwithstanding it is so plainly taught by Christ and his apostles, and was so diligently practiced by the church during the sixteenth century, when the church stood forth so gloriously in its practice and advocacy of sound doctrine.

CONCLUSION.

In conclusion we would earnestly invite the attention of our dear friends who profess the Christian religion, and who are members of one or other of the many religious organizations, to the truths presented in this tract. We are fully conscious of our very limited talent for writing. What we have written has been done out of love, with a desire to advance the best interest of souls, and for the extension of Christ's kingdom and the honor of his holy name. We are painfully impressed that many of our friends are in error, and are not aware of it. The prevailing sentiment is; all is well, Christianity is progressing.

There are many religious organizations formed in the interest of the popular churches; such as Young Men's Christian Associations, and Christian Endeavor societies; these, along with many others are powerful auxiliaries to the church. We are distressed in soul when we contemplate the untiring zeal and systematized effort for the Christianizing of the world. Why should we be distressed? The reason is that the doctrine of Christ is transgressed by those who profess such undying zeal for his honor.

The effort for the professed evangelization of man is a stupendous one. If we could recognize it as a Christian work, we would aid it with all the grace God would bestow. We cannot recognize it as such, because the members of all the popular churches allow unchristian liberties, among which are; going to law, retaining known sinners in the church, upholding and defending divisions to the extent of separate and distinct organizations, baptism of infants without scriptural authority, and conformity to the world in the excessive adorning of the body and the furnishing of houses, and so forth. We cannot recognize this as a true Christian work, since it substitutes a system involving a high civilization and advanced state of morality, for obedience to the self-denying doctrine of Christ and the apostles: we know it does not claim to do this, but it is nevertheless a fact. It is a profession of faith in Christ without obedience to his commands. Zeal for the conversion of sinners to the faith, and for their recovery from immorality, is substituted for obedience to the plain commands of Christ; which is manifested by efforts of the churches against intemperance, licentiousness and every form of immorality.

If the work of an advanced civilization and morality were carried forward under the name of moralization, we would support it, as would every lover of good morals. Popular

religion is elevating the standard of citizenship, strengthening the commonwealth; and we admire the work as far as it accomplishes the amelioration of mankind. But what troubles us is that the present system of religious faith and practice, is not in agreement with the doctrine of Christ. That is with unity, peace and purity; and therefore it becomes a hindrance to many souls in attaining to a spiritual state, such as living faith in Christ, purity of heart, humility, meekness and separation from the world. There is no self-denial connected with the popular idea of Christian religion. All liberty for worldly enjoyment that any respectable man would desire, is allowed, such as living in the pride of life, gaining applause, and seeking glory for charity and works of benevolence, indulging in levity, wit and humor, in folly and amusment and in all manner of games and diversions exempt from immorality, all under the holy guise of having consecrated the affections of the heart and the powers of the mind to the advancement of God's glory. Hence the accesions to the churches are large; but will it not be a fearful disappointment if at the great and coming day they should hear the appalling declaration. "I never knew thee." Which refers to such who entered not in at the straight gate and walked not upon the narrow way. Can any one be a

Christian without obeying Christ? All will answer, No. Then we would ask how can we be Christians when we claim the right to defend our reputation, our person and our property, either by personal violence or by process of law; when Christ expressly teaches "resist not evil." How can we be followers of the Lord Jesus when we retain known sinners in the church, and admit them to communion, contrary to the doctrine of Christ and his apostles.

Dear reader, reflect upon the importance of hearing and obeying Christ and his apostles, and ever remember that his words will judge us at the last and coming day. The above facts are fully admitted by many friends, but they apparently are not willing to obey the light or do not know what to do. Our counsel is: Consider whether any people can claim to be the church of Christ, who willfully transgress his doctrine. (There is no middle ground.) Those organizations called churches, are either what they claim to be, or they are not. If they disobey Christs commands they are not his people, nor his church. It will then become the duty of every sincere soul to withdraw from them and obey the divine word: "Come out from among them and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing." This will become a necessity since they will not forsake the error of their way.

We are not oblivious to the fact that such statements as the above will be treated with scorn and contempt, by many of our learned friends. If we were to consider the number, popularity, power and great learning of the ministers of the so-called Christian churches and their co-laborers, and then compare them with our small number, weak state and general illiteracy, we might well conclude to refrain from or withhold our protest ; but we are deeply impressed with the fact that the word of the Lord endureth forever, and if we are in opposition to it, it will stand against us at the day of final accounts.

Beloved fellow believers and joint heirs of the eternal inheritance ; allow me to address you in a few words of caution and comfort: we live in a perilous time, dangers beset us on every hand ; we might have the form of godliness and yet be lacking the power thereof. The power will manifest itself in the love for Jesus and his holy word ; a love to read it and a delight in meditating thereupon, in watch fulness and prayerfulness ; in the love of the brethren ; in zeal for the salvation of all men. We might hold the doctrine of the unity, peace and purity of the church and also have the form thereof, we might separate from false worship, in short attend to all the forms of religion, and yet be spiritually dead.

We are called upon to shine as lights in

the world; we should walk in love toward all men, be given to hospitality, kind to the poor; relieving their necessities according to our ability. Our yea should be yea, and our nay should be nay, providing things honest in the sight of all men. A great responsibility devolves upon us. By our chaste, humble, meek and pure lives, we should show forth a light that will lighten the way for wayfaring souls. The Evangelist says of Christ: "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." So the life of Christ in us should give forth a lustre that will aid poor souls in their effort to find the narrow way of life.

One special danger to which we are exposed is that of losing the simplicity, freedom and love among ourselves. There should be no wounded feelings unheeded; no barrier to perfect freedom. We should ever be able to sit down together in heavenly places and have our conversation in heaven. Our affections should be detached from earthly possessions; we should be possessed of living faith; casting all our care upon the Lord who careth for us.

Beloved, if we remain steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, great will be our reward. If we are faithful to conviction, and the dictates of the Spirit, we shall overcome. "To him that overcometh, it shall be given to be clothed in white

raiment, his name shall not be blotted out of the book of life, but I will confess him before my Father and the holy angels." "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." "Unto them that look for him shall he come the second time without sin unto salvation." "Finally, brethren farewell, be of good comfort, live in peace, and so may the God of peace be with you ever. Amen.

To those of our dear friends who make no profession of religion: we entreat you for Jesus' sake, repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Forsake the world, bear the cross, confess your Saviour, hear and obey him, and he will bless and strengthen you; he will enlighten, comfort and seal you unto the day of final redemption. But if you remain unwilling to confess Christ and forsake the world, "Tribulation and anguish upon every soul that doeth evil." You may be possessed of light and knowledge to know the requirements of the gospel; you may be able to prove professed Christians by their lives and actions; you may also be morally honest and have adopted a high moral standard of life: but remember that with all the above attainments you are still an unsaved sinner. We entreat you in the name of Jesus who shed his precious blood that your souls might be reclaimed; we beseech you in behalf of your immortal souls which bear the image of your Maker, O do repent, forsake

sin, do not delay, "Seek the Lord while he may be found."

To those of our friends who have fallen into vice and immorality, who often are covered with confusion and shame, and who at times well nigh despair; we would say, obey your convictions, confess your sins, there is grace abounding for you. Christ died to save sinners. O, therefore, come with all your sins, and be unburdened; Christ has wrought redemption for such as you.

We cordially commend our unworthy effort and the beloved reader to the God of grace, that he may prosper every sincere motive to the promotion of his glory and to the eternal happiness of our souls. Amen.

JACOB S. LEHMAN,

May, 1895. Chambersburg, Pa.

SUMMARY

OF THE

Faith, Doctrine and Practice

OF

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

First. There is one God, almighty, all-wise, holy, pure and gracious, who created all things by his power and by his goodness; he created man in his own image and likeness, but, by the envy of the devil, sin entered into the world and we are all sinners through the transgression of Adam.

Second. Christ was promised unto the fathers, as the woman's seed which should bruise the serpent's head. He was born in the time appointed by God the Father, and after having honored the holy law by perfect obedience, he died for the salvation of all who believe and ascended to the right hand of God, there to intercede in behalf of all the saints upon earth.

Third. The Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father and Son, for the enlightening, purifying, sanctifying, strengthening and sealing of those who repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, unto the remission of sins that are past.

We believe that the Church of Christ

upon earth consists of all awakened, penitent and believing souls who have been regenerated through the power of God. These are the members of the household of God whose names are written in heaven and they are one in faith and life. As an expression of spiritual unity and fellowship they salute each other with the kiss of peace. We recognize no divisions in the Church of Christ but believe that it never has been divided, that it is not now, and that it never will be. Consequently we refuse to worship with those that are not united with us in faith and who repudiate by their walk and practice the idea of unity as taught by the scripture.

The commands of Christ and the apostles are our rule of life, consequently members of the church of Christ do not sue at law in defence of reputation, person or property: do not bear arms and serve as soldiers; do not hold civil offices under the government, nor assist in electing civil officers.

They honor the magistracy by paying taxes and all dues faithfully: ever praying for those in authority that the Lord may endow them with wisdom to rule in justice: and withal that they may realize that they are only servants and ministers in the kingdom of this world, and in order to become heirs of the everlasting inheritance they must be born again. They do not swear legal oaths, but affirm to the truth by yea, yea: nay, nay.

Persons of mature years and understanding minds who awaken to a sense of their sins, repent and forsake them and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, are baptized with water in the names of the Trinity. Infants are not fit subjects to receive baptism as they cannot comprehend the nature and design of it, neither has the Lord enjoined it upon them.

The Lord's supper, or communion of the breaking of bread and drinking of the cup, is observed in commemoration of the sufferings and death of Christ. Only believers who live a godly life are proper subjects to participate in this ordinance which is expressive of the harmony, unity and love of the church.

Feet washing is observed as emblematical of Christ's condescending love and of his washing and cleansing our souls from the defilement of sin, and also of the love which the members have for each other, which they manifest in endeavoring to provoke one another to good works by a godly walk and conversation and by reminding one another of their Christian duties.

Christian marriage can be solemnized only between believers. A believer in marrying an unbeliever transgresses apostolic teaching and does despite to the Spirit of the Lord, and such must be separated from the church as disorderly members.

Any members of the church who become

corrupted in life or doctrine and are unfruitful branches in the vine, must be separated for the preservation of the purity of the church, and for the recovery of the erring. Those who have fallen from grace and are separated from the church must be held in avoidance by all the members without respect of person, in the hope that such avoidance will lead such erring ones to reflection and repentance. If they are granted grace unto repentance they will again be restored to full fellowship of the church.

Finally: the church recognizes Christ as her prophet, priest and king, who is made unto her for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Who at his second coming will receive unto himself, those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life, who shall forever share his glory. And those who were not williing to confess his name and obey his word he will appoint their portion in outer darkness.

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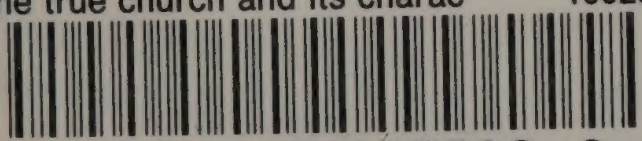

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